

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (previously presented): A coffee tablet having
a three-dimensional shape with a smooth outer surface and a closed surface pore structure;

an internal pore structure wherein a majority of the pores in the internal pore structure are interconnected and have a size of between 5 and 50 micrometers; and

the coffee tablet comprising coffee solids therein and the coffee tablet being of a size sufficient to prepare a coffee beverage when one or more coffee tablets are added to an appropriate amount of hot water.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The coffee tablet of claim 1 wherein the shape is selected from the group consisting of a disc, polygon, and coffee bean, and the smooth outer surface is obtained by molding a coffee composition that contains coffee solids in a smooth or polished mold.

Claim 3 (canceled):

Claim 4 (previously presented): The coffee tablet of claim 1, wherein the smooth outer surface is obtained by partially freezing the coffee composition into a slush, molding the partially frozen slush to form the three-dimensional shape, and coating the shape with coffee.

Claim 5 (original): The coffee tablet of claim 4 wherein coating is provided by immersing the frozen three dimensional shape into a concentrated coffee extract at a temperature range of between -5 to 20 °C with the liquid coffee extract having a concentration of between 30 and 60 % coffee.

Claim 6 (original): The coffee tablet of claim 2, wherein a gas is introduced into the coffee composition before it is introduced into the mold to create the pore structure.

Claim 7 (original): The coffee tablet of claim 1, wherein a coffee aroma is present adjacent the tablet to retain flavor and aroma during storage.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The coffee tablet of claim 1, comprising at least one component selected from the group consisting of a flavorant, a colorant, and an additional aroma.

Claim 9 (original): The coffee tablet of claim 8, wherein the flavorant, colorant or additional aroma is provided in a coating on the tablet.

Claim 10 (previously presented): A coffee tablet according to claim 1, wherein the coffee tablet has an overall porosity of 50 to 80% and density of 800 to 300 g/l.

Claim 11 (previously presented): A packaged coffee product comprising at least one coffee tablet having:

a three-dimensional shape with a smooth outer surface and a closed surface pore structure, an internal pore structure wherein a majority of the pores in the internal pore structure are interconnected and have a size of between 5 and 50 micrometers, and the coffee tablet comprising coffee solids therein and the coffee tablet being of a size sufficient to prepare a coffee beverage when one or more coffee tablets are added to an appropriate amount of hot water;

a package of a moisture resistant material for containing the at least one coffee tablet therein, and

a coffee aroma present in the package in an amount sufficient to retain the flavor and aroma of the coffee tablet.

Claim 12 (original): The packaged coffee product of claim 11, wherein the aroma is coffee aroma that contains aromatic volatiles and between 1 and 8 tablets are present in the package.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The packaged coffee product of claim 11, wherein the package material comprises a flexible laminate having at least two layers, which material is substantially impervious to permeation by gas or moisture and the coffee tablet(s) are sealed therein.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The packaged coffee product of claim 11, wherein the layers of the flexible laminate packaging material comprise a material selected from the group consisting of paper and plastic film.

Claim 15 (previously presented): A method for forming a coffee tablet for preparing a coffee beverage when added to an appropriate amount of hot water, comprising the steps of molding a coffee composition that contains coffee solids while adding a gas thereto to form a coffee tablet having a three-dimensional shape that conforms to that of the mold and that has a smooth outer surface and a closed surface pore structure, wherein the amount of gas added to the coffee composition is sufficient to form an internal pore structure, with a majority of the pores in the pore structure are interconnected and have a size of between 5 and 50 micrometers.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The method of claim 15, wherein the mold has a cavity that creates a coffee tablet that has a shape chosen from the group consisting of a disc, polygon, and a coffee bean.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The method of claim 15, wherein the smooth outer surface is obtained by freezing the coffee composition in the mold.

Claim 18 (canceled):

Claim 19 (previously presented): The method of claim 15, comprising the steps of obtaining the smooth outer surface by partially freezing the coffee composition into a slush, molding the partially frozen slush to form the three-dimensional shape; and coating the shape with coffee.

Claim 20 (previously presented): The method of claim 19, comprising the steps of providing the coating by immersing the frozen three dimensional shape into a concentrated coffee extract at a temperature range of between -5 to 20 °C. with the liquid coffee extract having a concentration of between 30 and 60 % coffee.

Claim 21 (previously presented): The method of claim 15 comprising the step of providing a coffee aroma adjacent the tablet to retain flavor and aroma of the tablet during storage.

Claim 22 (previously presented): The method of claim 15, which further comprises associating at least one of a flavorant, a colorant and an additional aroma with the tablet.

Claim 23 (original): The method of claim 22, wherein the flavorant, colorant or additional aroma is provided in a coating on the tablet.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The method of claim 15 comprising providing a packaged coffee product by placing at least one coffee tablet in a package of a moisture resistant material.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The method of claim 24 comprising providing a coffee aroma in the package in an amount sufficient to retain the flavor and aroma of the coffee tablet during storage in the package.

Claim 26 (original): The method of claim 25 wherein the aroma is coffee aroma that contains aromatic volatiles and between 1 and 8 tablets are present in the package.

Claim 27 (original): The method of claim 24, wherein the package material comprises a flexible laminate having at least two layers, which material is substantially impervious to permeation by gas or moisture and the coffee tablet(s) are sealed therein.

Claim 28 (previously presented): The method of claim 27, wherein the layers of the flexible laminate packaging material comprise a material selected from the group consisting of a paper or a plastic film.

Claim 29 (previously presented): A coffee tablet produced by the method of claim 15.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The packaged coffee product of claim 14, wherein the material has a metallized surface.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The method of claim 28, wherein the layers of the flexible laminate packaging material comprise a metallized surface.